Gail O’Kane joined RCTC in July 2013 as the college’s interim president, a position she will serve in for one year during the search for a permanent president. Dr. O’Kane is driven by her belief in the transformative power of education to help communities and individuals achieve their goals.

For two years prior to assuming her interim position at RCTC, Dr. O’Kane served as associate vice president for strategy, planning and accountability at Minneapolis Community & Technical College, which like RCTC is a comprehensive two-year MnSCU institution offering both liberal arts and career and technical education. In that capacity, she oversaw institutional research, strategic planning, quality improvement and activities related to the college’s accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association.

Before joining MCTC, Dr. O’Kane served as system director for education-industry partnerships for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, where she worked since 2005. In that role, Dr. O’Kane provided the system with strategic leadership in the areas of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and the life sciences.

Dr. O’Kane holds a doctoral degree in neuroscience from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a bachelor’s degree in political science from Boston College. She is the mother of a 9-year-old son, Jack.
Honoring an Extraordinary Scholarship Donor

Dr. Harold O. Perry was so much more than the excerpt you are about to read from his memorial program. He was remembered as a dreamer by one his sons. Not the dreamer who merely hopes and wishes, but a dreamer who planned and strategized to make dreams come true. One of the dreams he made come true was assisting RCTC students reach their dreams of a college education.

In 2004 and Dr. Harold and Loraine Perry established a scholarship for students pursuing a degree in a health related field. Harold had given instructions to the Chaplin who would later conduct the service for him to talk about eternal life and good works. Harold Perry will live on forever in the hearts and minds of his patients and the people he touched through his good works. The RCTC Foundation is deeply appreciative of the contributions made by Harold and Loraine Perry and wants to thank the family of Dr. Harold O. Perry for their support.

Harold Otto Perry was born November 18, 1921, in Rochester, Minnesota. He grew up with his older siblings Appolonia and Oliver and attended Rochester Public Schools.

Harold graduated from Rochester Junior College in 1942 and completed his B.S. Degree at the University of Minnesota. He was awarded his M.D. degree in 1946, also from the University of Minnesota.

After serving his country in the United States Navy from 1946-1948, Dr. Perry entered the Mayo Foundation Graduate School of Medicine. He earned his M.S. Degree in Dermatology in 1953 and was appointed a Mayo Consultant in Dermatology.

Dr. Perry had a long and distinguished career at Mayo. He became a world-renowned leader in dermatology and received many honors for his gifts as a teacher, skilled clinician, and innovative researcher.

Harold married Loraine Moehnke in 1944. Together, they raised their children Preston, Oliver, Ann, and John. Harold took great pride in his children, his eight grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Dr. Perry was a leader in many professional dermatology organizations. He was a member of Rotary International. Dr. Perry was also actively involved with the development of the Rochester Veteran’s Memorial.

outreach >>>

Scholarships Make a Difference

Scholarships do many things. They help lessen the impact of rising tuition costs, help students have more time to focus on their studies, decrease the number and amount of loans students need to take to complete higher education, but most of all they teach philanthropy.

The impact of a scholarship has an effect felt far beyond the student helped. The student’s success, thanks to the scholarship, may inspire younger siblings or the student’s own children to pursue higher education after high school. The student will be able to make more money with a college education and be a better provider for his or her family. In addition, that student will touch thousands of lives through his or her career whether it is in health, education, business, research or some other field. Enrolled students have an economic and tax revenue impact on our community by supporting restaurants, rental housing and other establishments. College education improves a person’s social engagement, community service and environmental concerns. College graduates are more likely to vote and volunteer. A college-educated workforce is highly correlated to lower levels of unemployment and higher levels of workforce participation.

When you provide a scholarship for a student, you do more than help them financially — you impart a lesson of generosity and concern for others that they incorporate into their own lives. By investing in a student, you improve their life, their family’s and our community.

Thank You

Dear Kent and Todd Brunner Scholarship Benefactor,

Please accept my sincerest thanks for sponsoring me, the Kent and Todd Brunner Scholarship for the 2013/2014 academic year at RCTC.

This will be my second year in the Health Information Technology program at RCTC and I look forward to graduating with an Associate of Applied Science degree next May. Your generous scholarship will help cover the cost of tuition in both the Fall and Spring Semesters as I complete my degree. Your assistance is particularly appreciated as I am an older student having a career change. My husband and I moved to Rochester last year and I enrolled for classes in a health-oriented program in hopes of gaining a job in medical coding and records management after graduation. The support you are providing will help me achieve my goal of becoming a successful Health Information Professional.

Many thanks for your kindness and generosity in sponsoring this scholarship and for selecting me as a recipient. I will continue to work diligently in my classes and will remember that you are helping me toward my goals.

Sincerely,
Angela "2013/2014 Scholarship Recipient"

In 1976, Ford founded Concerned Citizens for Minorities Affairs; which evolved into the nonpartisan Iowa Brown & Black Presidential Forum, which focuses candidate's attention on issues of significance to minorities in conjunction with Iowa's first in the nation presidential caucuses. In 1985 he founded Urban Dreams, to serve the needs of Des Moines's low income residents.

In 1996, Ford was elected to serve his community as an Iowa State Representative. Ford's district included some of most affluent areas of Iowa as well as some of the least; during his tenure as a State Legislator he was recognized as a champion for people in need. Ford retired as a State Representative in 2011 and was re-appointed to Iowa's Juvenile Justice Advisory Council by Iowa Governor Terry Branstad in 2012.

Ford was called "the voice of urban Iowans" during his six year run as host of his own weekly talk show on Des Moines' WHO radio, one of the few 50,000 watt clear channel AM radio stations in the country. He returned to the air waves in 2011 with "Wayne Ford Wants U" on Mediacom cable television, seen in five Midwestern states.

Ford is active with many organizations, doing what he loves "Works of Good." He has been inducted into numerous Halls of Fame, including the RCTC Alumni Hall of Fame in 1994. Wayne has participated in Yellowjacket golf fundraisers in past years and supports the good works of the RCTC Foundation.
The halls are buzzing with the students back in college and the RCTC Foundation has had many of them walk through its doors already. RCTC students are coming in to inquire about scholarship opportunities as a means to help pay for their college education. Each year the number of students seeking financial assistance from the Foundation has grown. In the last three years the scholarship application numbers have doubled. The RCTC Foundation has already paid out $193,145 in scholarships for FY 2013/2014. There is another disbursement of scholarship tuition funds scheduled to go out in January 2014. Even with that great news, we are only able to financially assist half of the students who apply.

The focus of the RCTC Foundation for the next year and a half is the 100 Year Anniversary of RCTC. To mark this major milestone, in the college’s history the Foundation intends to facilitate the establishment of an additional 100 scholarships. The intent is to ensure there are enough scholarship tuition funds available to meet the financial needs of RCTC students for the next 100 years.

As part of the Annual Fall Campaign, the 100 Year Anniversary Scholarship opportunity will be highlighted as an option to support. We are asking all of the Alumni, along with the present and past Faculty and Staff to share the news about the 100 Year Anniversary in 2015 and the 100 Scholarships for the next 100 Years Campaign.

Every gift large and small is deeply appreciated and makes a lasting impact on the life of a student. Please keep the RCTC Foundation in mind when making estate plans.